

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES/METHOD/EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

From ROMANIA VIITOARE (Bulletin mensuel - Correspondence:
Paris, Xe: 35 Boulevard de Strasbourg) for February 1953.

In order to end the confusion that persists in public opinion, and to set an end to the improprieties that have arisen in a certain press, whereby erroneous information can no longer be distinguished from obvious ill faith, we delegated one of our collaborators in the United States to request an explanation from the appropriate body or persons, in connection with the Fund and lawsuits in Switzerland. Minister Alexandre Cretzianu was kind enough to give our representative the following interview:

Interview with Mr. Al. Cretzianu, given on February 14, 1953.

Question: Have you taken note of the assertions in the latest issue of General Ion Gheorghe's newspaper, with regard to the lawsuits you have in Switzerland?

Answer: I am not in the habit of reading blackmail sheets issued by military men who have deserted to the enemy.

Q.: Nonetheless this publication has produced confusion among Rumania's emigration. Do you not consider it proper to give certain clarifications?

A.: It seems entirely improper to submit to the judgment of public opinion matters that are pending before the courts. Full clarifications can become available only on the day when the communist-initiated lawsuits will finally end.

Q.: But you say the series of lawsuits are not ended, whereas "Patria" affirms that the moneys in Berne had been released from legal escrow, and that you failed to avail yourself of the possibilities to reenter into their possession, whereupon they were again frozen on the basis of General Radescu's intervention on behalf of refugee Rumanian intellectuals. Would you not tell us at least what the truth is in this respect?

A.: The assertions you mention are entirely false. The truth is that I am at this time the defendant in a suit brought by the communist government of Rumania, newly begun on January 20, 1953. This is the old civil suit, which I won and which was reopened by the communists on the exclusive basis furnished newly by Radescu's letter of August 25, 1952, to the Investigating Judge of Bern. At the request of the communists, the Berne Court of Appeals ordered on January 23, 1953 that my account with the Union des Banques Suisses be frozen anew.

[L] [J]

From October 13, 1945, when these funds had been placed in escrow at the demand of the Groza government, my account has been constantly frozen, although the Swiss courts have so far handed down seven decisions in my favor. However, the communists have made each time the fullest use of appeal possibilities, resort to new courts, and initiation of fresh suits, to bring about the continuation of the sequestration.

Q.: What was the attitude of the Swiss courts toward the letter of General Radescu?

A.: The letter was placed in the file of the communist suit against me before the Berne Criminal Investigation Court. I received its text from my lawyer on November 8, 1952, at the time when the criminal suit brought against me by the communists on May 23, 1952, was still pending. It is interesting to observe that, during the first phase of the criminal suit, the matter was under the competence of the Investigating Magistrate of the Berne Tribunal. With a remarkable intuition, the author of the Radescu letter knew exactly to whom it was proper to address it, and guessed that he must make the allegation that the entire matter "has a criminal character". In this way, the Radescu letter went automatically into the file of the criminal suit brought in by the communists. Confirming the assertions formulated by the communists against myself, the letter could be of benefit only to them. Indeed, the Radescu letter includes a disturbing statement to the effect that "... it results from the Cretzianu files..." I myself have not shown the files of the suit, either to Mr. Radescu or to his friends. The files of the Court being secret, the only other available files are those of the communist plaintiffs.

Q.: The friends of General Radescu assert that his letter aimed solely at having the sums deposited in Switzerland attributed to exiled Rumanian intellectuals. Do you think the Swiss courts can accept this point of view?

A.: It is not true that the moneys come from an alleged fund for intellectuals. Even if we admit this absurd theory and also admit the absurdity that a court can order such payments to be made to a juridically non-existent abstract entity, it is obvious that it is precisely the Radescu letter that excludes the attribution of a single cent to "exiled Rumanian intellectuals". Indeed, by adopting the communist accusations, the Radescu letter alleges that the sums deposited in Berne were transferred by fraud in May, 1945. Should this allegation of Messrs. Radescu and Gheorghiu-Dej be accepted by the Swiss courts, the latter can hand down but one decision, to wit that these moneys be paid to the account of the Rumanian state as recognized by the Federal Government, that is to say, to the R.P.R. We are certainly living in an age of surprises, but

I doubt that Gheorghiu-Dej, after having made use of the testimony of General Radescu, will go to the length of handing the Berne moneys to the latter, after having gone to the trouble of bringing in so many lawsuits against me to obtain them.

Q.: What do you mean by the testimony of General Radescu?

A.: In the new civil suit brought in on January 20, 1953, the communist government of Rumania proposed General Radescu as its witness. This fact needs no comment.

Q.: Do you believe General Radescu realized that his letter could have such a consequence?

A.: In his present state, Mr. Radescu no longer realizes anything whatever. Whoever has known and respected him in the past believes him morally incapable of having committed wittingly all the strange acts of the last five years. His present attitude is the result of a progressive cerebral sclerosis. Certain acts of amnesia on his part are symptomatic in this respect. For instance, Mr. Radescu has completely forgotten that he received from me important sums, for his own use and that of Mr. Barbu Niculescu. He had forgotten completely that, for instance, he wrote to me, on April 10, 1947: "It is my duty to thank you also for what you caused to be done for me through Mr. Coste. Your dispositions, as unexpected as they are timely and welcome, have clarified a situation from which I do not see how I could have extricated myself."

Likewise Mr. Radescu no longer knows that, on June 4, 1947, he asked me for a financial support for "La Roumanie Independante", in the following manner:

"I take the liberty of soliciting your support - in case, of course, you consider my point of view can be shared. It would be a matter of some 500 Swiss Francs a month."

A recent case of amnesia appears clearly in the letter of Mr. Radescu of January 5, 1953, addressed to the "Association of Free Rumanians of the United States", in which he asserts he did not intend to associate the "League of Free Rumanians" to his own act. That is to say, Mr. Radescu had forgotten that his letter to the Investigating Magistrate of Berne was written on the official paper of the "League", and that he signed it "President: General Radescu".

But the best proof that Mr. Radescu can no longer be held responsible for his own acts lies in the fact that one passage in the letter of August 25, 1952, surpassing all limits of infamy, places in cause Victor Radulescu-Pogoneanu, one of the martyrs of anti-communist resistance, at this time

in chains in Rumania. This fact alone shows that the true General Radescu - the one who had defied the communists in February 1945 - is no longer among us at this time. He who today signs with the name of Radescu is a tool in the hands of others.

Q.: Who are the persons who were able to exert an influence on General Radescu?

A.: It will be the duty of us all to elucidate this grave matter thoroughly at the proper time. For the time being, we know precisely that Mr. Nicolae Malaxa has for the last five years exerted a predominant influence upon Mr. Radescu.

Q.: Are there any proofs of the connections between Mr. Malaxa and General Radescu?

A.: Mr. Radescu has admitted on numberless occasions, through statements made both to the Rumanian National Committee and to the American authorities, that, on the one hand, he is receiving important subventions from Mr. Malaxa, and, on the other hand, that he issues certificates in favor of the latter. What is more serious is that Mr. Malaxa obtained from Mr. Radescu that the latter make false statements - for instance an assertion under oath that the astronomic indemnity granted by the Groza government to Malaxa in connection with the latter's tube plants was but the putting into effect of a decision taken by the Radescu government. Later, Mr. Radescu went still farther: the American newspaperman Drew Pearson says in a column, published in the "Washington Post" of February 19, 1952, that he had received a letter from General Radescu stating that the government headed by the latter had effectuated the payment referred to above.

On October 17, 1952, Mr. Radescu issued a public denial in the "New York Times", to a notable member of the United States Congress, Mr. Celler, who had asserted that Mr. Malaxa had had "very, very dubious relations with the communists". Mr. Celler's statements had been made on the occasion of a television program, hence were not covered by parliamentary immunity. Mr. Malaxa could have sued Mr. Celler for libel; instead he got Mr. Radescu to reply in his own stead. It is obvious that Mr. Malaxa obtains Mr. Radescu's signature easily.

Q.: Is it true that Mr. Malaxa has had dubious relations with the communists?

A.: During the period of 1946 through 1948, Mr. Malaxa was overtly an agent in the United States for the communist-dominated government of Rumania. Surely this activity of Mr. Malaxa did not have a gratuitous character. At the same time he obtained from the communists a gift of \$2,460,000 in the form of an "indemnity" for his oilwell tube plants taken over

by the Soviet authorities.

Q.: Are there any proofs concerning the payment of the sum you mention?

A.: Of course. It is absolutely false that this payment had been decided in principle under the Radescu government. That decision was entirely that of the Groza government. As a matter of record, all the acts involved - that is to say, the Decree-Law of April 12, 1945, and the Journal of the Council of Ministers of June 7, 1945 - bear the signature of Gheorghiu-Dej, the head of the communist party of Rumania. It is these acts that fix the modalities of paying to Mr. Malaxa "Abroad" the sum of "\$2,460,000 in United States currency, effective and free from all present and future restrictions."

The indemnity granted to Mr. Malaxa is unique in its way. No single Rumanian was granted any such favors. No Rumanian has ever been paid by his government any indemnity payable in effective dollars. This payment was made, moreover, at a time when Rumania was being looted by the Soviet armies, when not even the United States or Great Britain, the victors, could succeed in obtaining indemnities for the British and American plants taken over in Rumania by the Soviet authorities. Such a favor granted by the communists to a great capitalist can be described as "dubious" only through an excess of indulgence.

Q.: But it is asserted that, since then, Mr. Malaxa has turned over to General Radescu important sums destined for Rumanian refugees.

A.: In that case, the exact amount of the sums given by Mr. Malaxa to Mr. Radescu, and the precise sums received by every Rumanian exile in need should be published. It is known that Mr. Malaxa has given several hundred thousand dollars to Mr. Radescu, but, the greater part of these sums has served but to support certain blackmail newspapers, which have maintained and deepened the dissensions among Rumanian exiles, the payments made by Mr. Malaxa have been made to the advantage of the communist cause.

Q.: One last question: Do you think the communist government will make use of the Radescu letter at home, too?

A.: This is not excluded in my opinion. We have a precedent, after all: when the government of Rumania was ousted by Vishinsky's act of force, the communists made use of the public statements of Mr. Radescu's own son against himself. Once the communists have cited Mr. Radescu as their witness in Berne, I do not see why they should not use his statements at home, where people do not know that the former Prime Minister is today irresponsible.-